

## Chapter Four in Focus: The Game is Rigged

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Entering the town, Kino, Juan Thomás talk about the story of the pearl agents who ran off:

*“The Father made that very clear. The loss of the pearl was a punishment visited on those who tried to leave their station. And the Father made it clear that each man and woman is like a soldier sent by God to guard some part of the castle of the Universe. And some are in the ramparts and some far deep in the darkness of the walls. But each one must remain faithful to his post and must not go running about, else the castle is in danger from the assaults of Hell.”*

Interpret the pieces of this extended metaphor, then give the moral of the sermon at the bottom.

Symbol or idea in sermon	Real-world meaning
Castle	
Man or woman	
To remain faithful to your post	
To go running about the castle	
Assaults of Hell	

Moral:

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When the perspective shifts to the pearl buyers, we learn:

*It was supposed that the pearl buyers were individuals acting alone, bidding against one another for the pearls the fishermen brought in. And once it had been so. ...Now there was only one pearl buyer with many hands.*

*He hummed under his breath while his right hand practiced legerdemain. He rolled a coin back and forth over his knuckles and made it appear and disappear, made it spin and sparkle. The coin winked into sight and as quickly slipped out of sight, and the man did not even watch his own performance.*

Give the definition for your vocabulary word *legerdemain*. \_\_\_\_\_ . What professional typically needs this skill? What is Steinbeck suggesting here?

Explain how Kino has lost the game before he even enters the town.

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### Back at Home: Kino vs. the Universe

*“You have defied not the pearl buyers, but the whole structure, the whole way of life, and I am afraid for you.”*

Shortly after Juan Thomás says this, what happens to Kino?

As Juana is cleaning him up, she says,

*“Kino, this pearl is evil. Let us destroy it before it destroys us. Let us crush it between two stones. Lest us—let us throw it back in the sea where it belongs. Kino, it is evil, it is evil!”*

Look at the next paragraph. What is Kino’s physical response? Then, what does he say?

Which force do you think is stronger: Fate, or Kino’s will to succeed? Why?